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ABSTRACT

Since the enactment of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 many manifestations of self-determination and community control have surfaced in Native communities. During the 1940s the United States Indian Service attempted to initiate cross cultural education but had limited success. The 1960s saw significant education but had limited success. The 1960s saw significant change in Indian education at the postsecondary level when student activism brought about the establishment of ethnic studies programs and courses on Native culture and languages. The 1967 passage of Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act greatly stimulated interest in the bilingual education of Native children. The Rough Rock Demonstration School is one example of a successful bilingual, bicultural program. Navajo is the language of instruction for beginning students, and cultural studies continue with a strong emphasis upon written Navajo, which is possible because of a standardized Navajo orthography and the support of the Navajo Curriculum Center. The Indian Self Determination Act of 1977 has fostered community control of schools and given new hope to many Indian parents. Cultural revitalization and restoration has resulted from education from a native perspective. The current need is for evaluations of Native education, conducted by Native researchers and shared with Native communities. (JHZ)

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Contemporary Cultural Revisitation: Bilingual and Bicultural Education

Dr. Beatrice Medicine

This presentation will not deal with educational inequities and past programs of cultural genocide via schooling processes which were inflicted upon the indigenous populations of the United States. Rather, it will examine the many manifestations of self determination and community control which have surfaced in Native communities since the enactment of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. Although many analyses of "the Collier years" have proliferated in historical journals (Phipps, 1978, among others), the Native viewpoint of these years has been largely neglected in the literature on Indian education. Growing up on Standing Rock reservation in South Dakota during the initial enactment of the IRA, many of us involved in the politics of our parents, asked each other "Are you a 'New Dealer' or an 'Old Dealer'?" referring to the policies of the Roosevelt Administration. More strikingly, many of the students in the public schools were astonished when we looked at bilingual readers written in our Native Siouan language, Lakota. Such books are ***Brave Against The Enemy*** (T'OKA WAN ITKOK'IP OHITIKE KIN HE) by Ann Clark and Helen Post and printed at Haskell Institute, 1944. These were welcome additions to the Christian hymnals and Bibles which were often the main sources of our abilities to read our Native languages and learn some of the transformed value configurations which might have been lost if there were no written accounts of the underlying principles of our cultural beliefs and norms. Thus, the complete demolition of our cultural norms by missionaries had other unforeseen results. The Lakota norm of "sharing" also opened our horizons to bilingual readers. These bilingual readers which were done in the Native languages of Navaho and Lakota may be evaluated in the historic record as the initial impact of bilingual and bicultural education for but a segment of the Native population in the 1940's.

It was during this period, according to Margaret Szasz (1974) that revisionist educators in the U.S. Indian Service attempted to introduce "cross cultural education" into the Bureau curricula. It appears that the subtle but perduring mode tended toward the acculturational model. For despite the rich and varied life styles of the many different Indian tribes, the underlying premise of education was still oriented to the mode of adaptation to the dominant White society. This attitude seemed to reflect the actual practice rather than the policies of the Collier administration. Educational policies and their implementation are often at variance and this dissonance still plagues many innovative programs today. I attempted to deal with past policies of bilingual education ("Bilingual Education and Public Policy: The Cases of the American Indians," In Padilla, Raymond V. (Ed.) ***Bilingual Education and Public Policy in the United States.***

What were the parameters of bi-cultural and

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bilingual education? Some of the best sources for an assessment of these programs are found in the pamphlets published by the Education Division of the U.S. Indian Service, and entitled ***Indian Education.*** By carefully perusing these, several saliencies emerge. Unfortunately, although the impact of parochial schools has been great upon the education of U.S. Natives, the culling of policies and practices is not as easy. The analysis of the impact of Church schools upon the education of Indian people needs examination to give partity of processes.

However, under the guise of "Progressive Education" and the use of anthropologists in the teaching of cultural differences to Indian Service teachers during the early 1940's this new trend to relevancy to Natives in cross-cultural learning situations was initiated but not completely incorporated into the education of the indigenous peoples of the U.S. It was only in the 1960's when new orientations to old themes were instituted in Indian education. Whatever the evaluation of the Collier administration, the vision of an educational system which incorporated Native culture was perhaps too innovative for that time.

It behooves us at this juncture to examine some of the articulations of Native peoples in the educational realm. Edward Dozier, Santa Clara Pueblo anthropologist, noted that "high drop out rates of Native students, as we go up the scale of grade levels, is largely the result of negative ratings attributed to Native-American culture." (Szazs, 1977, p. 146). This succinct statement, I believe, correctly assesses factors which account for the supposed low self-image, the lack of motivation, and the general maladjustment to schooling processes which had no relevance to the Native student. It is apparent, however, that the continual denigration of one's natal culture and the superimposition of cultural values and norms which are without meaning have taken a toll in the self-actualization of indigenous peoples. However, the continued use of Native languages in homes in reservation, rural and urban communities speaks to the value placed upon Native languages and stresses the viability of this form of cultural expression. We must not, however, forget the other aspects of culture, religion, beliefs, music, dance, and oral history, story-telling, world view and kinship systems which have been used as means of cultural and linguistic continuity. Although it is recognized that legislated policies have had a great effect on Indian learning systems, it is within the nexus of socio-linguistic manifestations in diverse Native communities where the essence of Native culture flourishes and exists despite generations of pressure to change. The very persistence of viable languages speaks immensely to the vitality of Native life in the United States. Rather than examine the imposed policies, it seems more profitable to look to socio-linguistics studies to comprehend the adaptive strategies utilized by Native people. Several studies (i.e., the Assinibone Sioux Robert V. Dumont's paper "Learning English and How to be Silent: Studies in Sioux and Cherokee Classrooms (Cazden, John, and Hymes, 1972, pp. 344-369) and Susan Phillips work on the Warm Springs reservation in Oregon ("Participant Structures" and Communicative Competence: Warm Springs Children in Community and Classroom, Ibid, 370-374) are examples of adaptive strategies which Native students have evolved in communication styles. Studies of speech patterns in Native communities are not as evident. This is an area in which much research needs to be accomplished. For, I submit, Native language use in community context will give new insights in cultural continuity.

Retrospectively, one must assess the decade of the 1960's in order to place bilingual and bicultural programs in proper perspective. This decade was a time of social unrest with ethnic constituencies in various universities striking to make curricula more relevant to the downtrodden Blacks, Chicanos, Asians, and the newly designated "Native Americans." The thrust for significant change in Native education on the post-secondary level gained momentum with the occupation of Alcatraz (November, 1969) by university students (and community members) in San Francisco. Student activism was essential in establishing Ethnic Studies Programs which encompassed the American Indians as the smallest minority. Interestingly, this group presented the most distinctive aspects of cultural diversity and distinctiveness. Courses on Native culture and the teaching of Native languages (primarily Lakota, a Siouan language and Navaho representing the largest group in the U.S.) were instituted at such places as University of California-Berkeley, San Francisco State University, and other different Native languages at universities. An assessment of language use is outlined in my paper, "Speaking Indian: Parameters of

Language Use."

In some isolated cases, Native languages have been accepted as requirements for second (or foreign) language competency (Eastern Montana College Crow, Northern Cheyenne Cree; University of Washington Salish; University of Utah Navajo; Univerity of Minnesota Ojibwa or Dakota). By far, the most important and tangible result of the 60's was the establishment of Native American or American Indian Studies Programs at many institutions of higher education. Many of these programs provided a consciousness-raising and positivism regarding Native cultures (Medicine, 1973). Only recently has a program been established to grant M.A. degrees in Native American Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. The impact of these programs has been in the area of identity and ethnic pride. A final evaluation of occupational achievement of students who have gone through an Ethnic Studies curriculum is still forthcoming. However, the impact upon universities has been sizeable. The attendance of students in colleges and universities has increased tremendously since that era. Very often, enrollment in Native American Studies Programs led students into other occupations as law, medicine, the social sciences, with education still being the predominant choice of indigenous students. Concomittantly, there is evident a trend that many students, mainly urban, claiming native ancestry. This trend needs amplification for its impact upon enhanced native-ness and self-image. Undoubtedly, the courses offered in such programs have engendered cultural awareness and heightened cross-cultural comparisons. This trend has been compatible with the emphasis on multi-cultural education in the dominant society.

Of direct impact upon Indian education have been the tribally-controlled Community Colleges based on Indian reservations. As institutions based in communities, they are attuned to native needs. One of the strong points of these indigenously controlled learning units is that they tend to attract "drop-outs" or as some persons state, "push-outs" from high schools, take them through a General Equivalency Degree (GED), and attract more mature students into two years of college. At the present time, there is one community college, Sinte Gleska on Rosebud reservation in South Dakota which has a four-year accreditation. Most of the colleges present courses on Native Studies and there is some evidence of native languages being offered. Integration of native cultural content throughout reservation learning institutions is not as readily apparent.

In some instances, the development of bilingual materials has been impeded by the lack of agreement on orthography and the effective design of curriculum materials. At present, there is a decided interest in the computerization of native languages. The computerization of Navajo and the use of computers at Rock Point, New Mexico presents new dimensions in language and culture for the Navajo. The Bad Wound School at the Pine Ridge reservation also had computerized the Lakota language. Evaluations of these trends still remain to be accomplished.

Previous to this, was the appearance of ***Indian Education: A National Tragedy A National Disgrace*** (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969) was a landmark event. This government publication documented that:

> There are nearly 300 Indian languages in use today. More than one half of the Indian youth today between the ages of 6 and 18 use their native language. Two thirds of Indian children entering Bureau of Indian Affairs schools have little or no skills in English. (1969, p. 116).

Certainly, although at this time approximately 60% of native children were attending public schools, little mention was made of them except in the publication, ***An Even Chance*** (New York: NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, 1971). This pamphlet indicated that in all areas of education, "Indians do not get the educational benefits that they are entitled to receive." (1971, 2) The laws referred to are Impact Aid, Johnson-O'Malley, (1934) and Title 1 (1965) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The document indicates that schools in the public system were not effective due to the lack of parental involvement (often because parents were left out of the decision-making processes on School Boards, the racist nature of many communities in which Indians live, and that curricula was oriented to "mainstreaming" the students.

Thus, the passage of the 1967 amendment of Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 greatly stimulated interest in the bilingual education of native children. Since language and culture are interwoven so intricately, this was a step forward in fostering cultural emphases in curricula. Although the funds allotted to Indian progress has been

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minimal, the aim of the amendment indicated that:

> This program can do much more than enable the child to learn English through use of his native language. It can emphasize the history and culture of the Indian, provide for native aides in the classroom and develop a system of home school coordinators to improve the relationship between school and family. The bilingual education program offers opportunities to sensitize teachers to Indian culture through inservice and preservice programs. Programs can be provided to train students. One effort presently in operation provides for a curriculum guide for mothers of Cherokee children so that they can work with their children in understanding new language concepts. ***(Indian Education: A National Tradegy A National Challenge,*** 1969, p. 116).

As with most objectives set out in philosophical frames, the direction of programs depends upon the perception and implementation of policy directives. As much of the literature on successful programs indicates, Rough Rock Demonstration School has been touted as one of the most effective programs. Navajo is the language of instruction for beginning students and cultural studies continue with strong emphasis upon written Navajo as the students progress. This has been possible for the ancestral language and culture are viable and functional in most Navajo communities. Additionally, and more effectively, the orthography developed by Dr. Oswald Werner for the Navajo language, seems to have been accepted by most Navajo bilinguals. This has allowed for the development of cultural curricula as orthography has been standardized. In support of culturally relevant materials the Navajo Curriculum Center has been producing materials which have fostered bilingual competence. The Navajo Community College Press at Tsaile, Arizona has also developed oral histories, books and classroom materials which has supported bilingual education. Besides having programs in elementary and secondary curricula, a strong and focussed support system seems essential for effective bilingual and bicultural programs.

This commitment to a regularized orthography is a first step to realistic programs. Despite bilingual readers and materials for the Western Sioux, much time has been spent by native educators in South Dakota to agree upon an orthography. There have been various commitments to different means of writing the Siouan language that has somewhat hindered bilingual development. Preferences for styles worked out by early missionaries have had their own proponents. Thus, the dynamics of native communities in terms of bilingual and bicultural programs play an important part in the implementation of funded programs. As in most cases when new programs are introduced into native communities, various political and practical interests come into play. Culturally relevant education programs have not been spared this evidence of local level politics. This fact has made the evaluation of the programs somewhat difficult. Again, it points to the problem of summative or cummulative evaluation procedures for many of the bilingual programs have perhaps been the weakest aspect of programs funded by Title VII. Whatever the difficulties, it seems necessary at this time to emphasize the favorable aspects of these projects. The employment of native persons who are experts in traditional language, history and culture has given a new impetus to community input in schools. There has, however, been the ubiquitous problem of certification. The use of teacher aids in language programs has somewhat diminished the status of instruction in the educational hierarchy. Again, the quality of the program depends to a marked degree upon the interpersonal relationships of teacher, aid, and native historians and language expert.

In general, the movement toward community control of schools (as with the Rocky Boy, Montana, Rock Point, New Mexico, and others) has given new hope to many American Indian parents. The Association of Community-Controlled Schools has trained School Boards to manage their own institutions and has dove-tailed with the movement for self-determination in native institutions and the interface of school and community. This orientation has been fostered by the Indian Self Determination Act of 1977. More recently, tribes such as the Papago and the Standing Rock Sioux have established Tribal Codes dealing with education in general, and language maintenance, in particular. As with other regulatory attempts, as the Indian Child Welfare Act, the enactment of realistic programs will depend upon enforcement of the codes.

But what has generations of language repression exerted upon native communities in various tribal settings? Some speech communities have lost their ancestral languages entirely. Therefore, language retrieval programs have been part of the Title VII spectrum!

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The Onieda (an Iroquoian speaking group) in Wisconsin have instituted a language revitalization project which has been tied to a cultural renaissance which has included the establishment of a Tribal Museum and Archives, and increased interest in native religion, and oral history. In general, the movement towards cultural revitalization is seen on many fronts in the native communities both rural and urban in the United States. The enactment of the Freedom of Religion Act of 1979 is evidence that native cultural revitalization is a fact.

It seems apparent that a groundswell of native revitalization is occurring in native North America. Evidences of this nativistic orientation is also evident in Canadian native communities.

How can this groundswell be assessed in the area of language and culture? There is a paucity of evaluation studies. In one of the few assessments of a bilingual program funded by Title VII, Kennith York documents the Choctaw Bilingual Education Program in Mississippi. He concludes, "One of the unique characteristics of the Mississippi Choctaws has been their belief in true bilingual development utilizing both Choctaw and non-Choctaw cultures and languages. The Choctaw parents wish for their children not only to be educated, but to be educated Choctaws." (York, 1979, p. 35.) What is needed in the literature of bilingual and bicultural programs as evidenced in the educational institutions of native communities are assessments of programs and the interpretations of the results of the evaluations to community members. These additions to the literature should be done by native researchers and shared with other language and culture programs. Cultural revitalization and restoration has resulted from education from a native perspective. This has been one of the positive aspects of the educational emphasis upon native language and culture which has remained vibrant despite all efforts to change our institutions.

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